

FRUGAL VEGETARIAN COOKING

by Matt Pierard

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Dedicated to self-sufficient college students, the working poor, or unemployed / retired folks living on a fixed income, the following set of recipes are for you. This collection was kitchen-tested over a year's period with basic ingredients any competent cook can handle and are largely presented in the date order that they were originally prepared. All of these recipes are generally heart-healthy, low-sodium, low-calorie, and ideal for people on blood thinner. Cabbage and similar high-Vitamin K vegetable amounts may be lowered or omitted entirely due to known side effects with blood-thinner.

Low-cost larder – a basic grocery list:

Potatoes (Russet, Idaho, red-skinned, and/ or sweet, in season); onions (yellow or the sweeter white, in season); white rice (3 – 10 lb bag); brown rice (3-5 lb bag); lettuce; carrots; celery; cabbage; tomatoes; avocado (cheapest throughout summer, depending on location); corn (in season); squash; pumpkin; green beans; bell peppers; apples (all varieties); applesauce (preferably unsweetened); grapes (in season); oranges (ditto); bananas; dry lentils and beans; canned beans, corn, and tomatoes; frozen mixed vegetables / peas & carrots; whole-wheat bread; low-sodium salt; seasonings: garlic powder, onion powder, basil, Italian, curry, and chili powders; black pepper; hot sauce; black tea; instant oatmeal; veg. boullion; mayonnaise; mustard; ketchup; vinegar (apple cider is best); self-rising flour and corn meal; cooking/salad oils (canola, olive); butter or margarine; eggs; low-fat milk; yogurt; cheese; peanut butter; preserves; pickles; lemon juice; lime juice; canned fruit; raisins; brown sugar; and honey.

Abbreviations used throughout:

BTB: Better Than Boullion. This is a concentrated paste that comes in a wide variety of flavors.

Naturally, I only used the vegetarian blends – a carrot-based formula I refer to as 'yellow', a tomato version, and a mushroom-based version I call 'brown'. A \$5 jar can last a couple of months.

MD: Mrs Dash herb blends. This is an excellent, sodium-free alternative to salt. It comes in Garlic, Onion, Italian, Lime-Chipotl, and other blends. Averages \$3 a jar; used sparingly, will last 2-3 mos.

S.R.: Self-rising, re flour. Slightly more expensive than plain flour, but worth the time saved from measuring out baking powder and soda.

Notes:

The cooking / salad oil used most often is Canola oil; olive oil is more expensive, but bought on sale is a worthy addition to any dish. Your best dessert is fresh fruit in season, hence the few sweet recipes. ;)

VEGETARIAN VEGETABLE SOUP

Brown in 2 Tbsp cooking oil:

3 sliced onions

2 sliced tomatoes

2 thick-sliced carrots

1 sliced stalk of celery

2 minced cloves of garlic

Add this mixture to a large stew pot, $\frac{3}{4}$ full of boiling, salted water.

Add 3-4 sliced red or gold potatoes, and $\frac{1}{4}$ head of cabbage, and add to stew pot. Cook these vegetables on Medium heat until soft enough to cut into, about one hour, depending on thickness, then add one can of tomato sauce, and 1 tsp MD Onion. Lower the temperature to Simmer; cook for 1 hour and add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of instant oats. Continue simmering, covered, until ready to serve. Dust with black pepper.

3-ALARM CHILI

Brown in stew pot in cooking oil:

3 sliced onions

1 sliced stalk celery

3 sliced tomatoes

1 seeded and sliced green bell pepper

2 minced cloves of garlic

Add

1 can of dark red kidney beans

1 can of no-salt yellow corn

1 6 oz can of tomato paste

Season with:

2 Tbsp chili powder

1 Tbsp MD Lime-Chipotle

1 Tbsp lime juice

2 Tsp Tabasco sauce

$\frac{1}{2}$ Tsp coriander

Simmer on Medium for 1 hour or more, then reduce to Simmer before serving.

SWEET POTATO CASSEROLE

1 large sweet potato, sliced thin

2 sliced yellow onions

1 package sliced mushrooms, preferably fresh

1 can Italian-style diced tomatoes

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup olive oil

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup Romano-Parmesan grated cheese

1 tsp MD Garlic

2 tsp MD Italian

Pour $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of oil into glass baking dish. Layer potato slices, onion, mushrooms, and tomatoes.

Drizzle with rest of oil and sprinkle on cheese and herbs. Bake in a 375 F oven for 30 minutes, or until brown on top.

Serve with green salad and pasta dressed in oil and herbs.

HERBED PASTA

Cook one small box thin spaghetti or half-box of rotini as directed. Drain and dress with 2-3 Tbsp olive oil, 1 Tbsp tub margarine or butter, and 1 Tbsp MD Italian.

GREEN SALAD

Shred $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ a head of iceberg lettuce; add 2 sliced stalks of celery, 2 Tbsp green olives, and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sliced onion. Dress in vinaigrette.

RED BEAN AND POTATO SOUP

1 quart water boiling
2 sliced large potatoes
2 sliced onions
1 sliced stalk of celery
2 tsp low-sodium salt
1 tsp black pepper
1 can red beans
1 can diced tomatoes
1 cup frozen mixed vegetables
1 Tbsp BTB Brown

Add ingredients to water and gradually pull the heat down to Low-Medium, simmering gently for 1-2 hours. Serve with crisp multigrain flatbread crackers.

APPLE RAISIN BREAD

1 cup sifted self-rising flour
1 single-serve ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup) unsweetened applesauce
1 cored and diced fresh apple (Jonathan, Yellow Delicious, or Granny Smith)
2 Tbsp raisins
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water
1 Tbsp instant creamer
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup brown sugar
1 tsp vanilla
1 tsp cinnamon
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp ginger
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup instant oatmeal

Mix ingredients together thoroughly and scrape into greased loaf pan. Bake at 350 F for about 1 hour.

OVEN-ROASTED POTATOES

3 sliced-thick potatoes
3 Tbsp cooking oil
2 tsp MD Garlic or Onion

Mix ingredients thoroughly and roast at 425 until brown. Sliced onion, squash, and/or carrot can be added for extra flavor.

HALF-CUP SPICE CAKE

1 ½ cup sifted S.R. flour

½ cup milk

½ cup applesauce

½ cup canola oil

½ cup brown sugar

1 tsp cinnamon

½ tsp powdered ginger

1 tsp vanilla

Mix ingredients thoroughly and bake 1 hour in greased pan at 350 F.

GARDEN VEGETABLE OMELET

1 egg

1 slice sharp cheese

¼ cup frozen mixed vegetables

1 Tbsp margarine or butter

Fry egg in margarine. Sprinkle with cold vegetables. Season as desired, and top with cheese. Cover pan and turn off heat. The cheese will melt and the vegetables cook in the ambient steam. Serve on slice of multigrain toast.

BARLEY & BEAN STEW

1 cup rinsed dry barley

2 sliced onions

3-4 chopped carrots

1 sliced stalk celery

2 Tbsp BTB Brown

2 Tbsp cooking oil

1 can red kidney beans

2 sliced tomatoes

1 tsp garlic powder

1 tsp basil

1 tsp black pepper

Brown onions, tomatoes, and celery in oil in a stew pot. Add up to 3 quarts water and bring to a boil. Add boullion and beans, and bring down heat to Medium. Add the barley and cook for 45 minutes, stirring occasionally. Pull heat down to Simmer and season with garlic, basil, and pepper, under cover. Serve.

VEGETARIAN RAREBIT

- ½ cup sliced onion
- 1 sliced carrot
- 1 cup sliced cabbage
- 1 seeded and sliced small green pepper
- 1 Tbsp cooking oil
- ¼ - ½ cup shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 tsp MD Onion
- ½ tsp garlic powder

Brown vegetables in oil, then sprinkle on seasonings and cheese. Cover pan and lower heat until cheese melts. Serve on toasted whole-wheat bread.

TOMATO SPINACH SOUP

- 1 cup frozen spinach, or 2 cups fresh, washed spinach (High in Vitamin K)
- 3 sliced plum tomatoes
- 2 diced onions
- 1 diced stalk of celery
- 4 quartered red potatoes
- 1 diced carrot
- 1 tsp allspice
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp low-sodium salt
- 1 tsp black pepper
- 1 Tbsp BTB Tomato
- 2 Tbsp cooking oil
- 2 quarts water

In a stew-pot, brown tomatoes, onion, celery, and carrot in oil. Add potatoes, water, spinach, seasonings and stock base. Bring to a boil, then back down to simmer for 1 hour or more.

APPLE ONION SALAD

- 1 sliced-thin apple (Gala, Granny Smith, Golden Delicious, or Fuji)
 - 1 sliced small red or Vidalia onion
 - 1 sliced-thin stalk of celery
 - 1 Tbsp raisins
 - 1 Tbsp apple cider vinegar
 - 2 Tbsp salad oil
 - 1 Tsp MD Onion
- Toss and serve, or let marinate in fridge for about a half-hour before serving.

BASIC STIR-FRY

Chop:

2 onions

2-3 cups cabbage

½ to 1 cup whole or baby carrots

1 cup broccoli florets

1 cup cauliflower florets

1 large celery stalk

½ to 1 cup yellow squash

Fry quickly in 3-4 Tbsp cooking oil until tender. Season with:

1 Tsp low-sodium salt

1 tsp MD Garlic

1 tsp powdered ginger

1 tsp minced or powdered garlic

2 Tbsp teriyaki sauce (optional)

Simmer for five minutes. Serve with 1-2 cups cooked rice.

SWEET & HOT STIR-FRY

Fry:

2 sliced carrots

2-3 cups sliced cabbage

1 sliced onion

in 2 Tbsp cooking oil

Add:

1 tsp MD Chipotle

¼ cup tomato sauce

1-2 tsp Tabasco or Louisiana Hot sauce

2 Tbsp dark brown sugar

2 tsp lime juice

Bring down the heat to simmer and cover for 10 minutes. Serve with white rice and a pitcher of orange juice.

COLD FRUIT SALAD

2 cored and diced apples

1 cup grapes

1 sliced banana

1 Tbsp honey

1 tsp lemon or lime juice

½ tsp ginger

Stir ingredients together and serve cold.

CABBAGE AND CARROT STEW

2-3 cups sliced cabbage
4 sliced-thick carrots
2 sliced onions
4-6 quartered red potatoes
1 diced stalk celery
2 cups fresh green beans (optional)
1 Tbsp BTB Yellow
1 Tsp low-sodium salt
1 tsp black pepper
2 tsp MD Onion
3 Tbsp cooking oil

In a stew-pot, brown onions, cabbage, carrots, and celery in oil. Add potatoes, 2 quarts of water, and seasoning. Bring to a boil, then reduce to Simmer for one or more hours. Add green beans half-way (or less) through, to retain color. The cooked potatoes and carrots may be mashed to thicken stew.

CORN-BEAN BREAD

½ cup S.R. flour
½ cup S.R. corn meal flour
¼ cup cooking oil
¼ cup milk
1 can red kidney beans, drained
1 Tbsp onion powder
1 tsp MD Chipotle
2/3 cup salsa or small can tomato sauce
2 slices cheddar or jack cheese

Mix all ingredients except cheese thoroughly and pour into greased loaf pan. Top with cheese. Bake at 370 F for 1 hour. For a 'fluffier' version, use 2 cups s.r. flour, 2/3 cup corn meal flour, 1 cup milk, and ½ cup oil.

AVOCADO PIZZA

Stir together:

1 diced avocado
1 sliced plum tomato
1 Tbsp olive oil
1 tsp lemon or lime juice
1 Tbsp feta, blue, or Gorgonzola cheese
½ tsp garlic powder
½ tsp basil powder
½ tsp onion powder

Spread upon three slices toasted multigrain bread and serve.

SAVORY CORNMEAL PANCAKES

1 cup self-rising corn meal flour

1 cup boiling water

1 tsp low sodium salt

1 ½ tsp onion powder

1 tsp MD Onion

½ cup s.r. Flour

½ cup milk

2 Tbsp cooking oil

1 cup black beans

1 cup tomato salsa

1 cup shredded cheddar cheese (optional)

Soak corn meal, salt, and onion in water for 10 minutes, covered. Heat pan or griddle. Stir corn meal mix into flour, milk, and oil. Pour or spoon out 2" - 3" rounds of batter into pan and cook both sides.

Layer pancakes with beans, salsa, and cheese.

SUNSHINE OMELET SANDWICH

2 eggs

2 slices whole-wheat toast

1 slice cheese

1-2 Tbsp orange marmalade

1 Tbsp cooking oil

1 Tbsp margarine or butter

Fry eggs in oil, top with cheese, cover and turn off heat. Butter toast and spread with marmalade. Lay omelet on one slice and top with the other.

AVOCADO SALAD

1 diced avocado

1 diced tomato

1 diced stalk of celery

1 sliced carrot

2 sliced radishes

½ cup sliced mushrooms

½ cup sliced olives

2 Tbsp salad oil

1 tsp garlic powder

1 Tbsp lime juice

1 tsp basil

½ tsp black pepper

½ tsp Tabasco sauce

Toss thoroughly and serve as is, or on bed of lettuce.

COOL BEANS SALAD

1 can no-sodium sliced green beans, drained

1 can light red kidney beans, drained

1 sliced plum tomato

2 sliced green onions (optional)

2 Tbsp salad oil

1 Tbsp apple cider vinegar

1 tsp garlic powder

1 tsp basil

1 tsp black pepper

Toss mixture together in lidded plastic container and refrigerate 1-2 hours. Serve on bed of lettuce, or with a side of cold cooked rice.

SUCCOTASH SOUP

1 can low-sodium corn

1 ½ cups cooked lima beans

2 sliced onions

2 sliced-thick carrots

1 Tbsp BTB Yellow

1 ½ quarts water

1 Tbsp cooking oil

1 tsp garlic powder

½ tsp black pepper

2 Tbsp margarine

Combine corn, beans, and margarine and simmer for an hour. Brown onions in a stew-pot and add carrots. Stir in succotash, and pour in the water, boullion, and seasoning. Bring to a boil and then pull it down to simmer for at least one hour.

OLIVE AND CARROT SPREAD

1 sliced carrot

2 Tbsp raisins

¼ cup pitted olives

¼ cup Canola oil

¼ cup olive oil

1 tsp MD Garlic

Grind ingredients in a blender or food processor into a chunky paste. Serve on toast or rye crackers.

TOMATO SPREAD

2 finely-chopped plum tomatoes

1 Tbsp olive oil

1 tsp MD Garlic

Blend thoroughly and serve on crisp bread.

TOMATO PUMPKIN SOUP

1 can diced tomatoes
or 2 cups sliced fresh tomatoes
1 sliced onion
1 diced stalk celery
½ cup sliced carrots
1 Tbsp cooking oil
1 cup pumpkin puree
1 tsp MD Garlic
1 tsp basil
2 Tbsp BTB Yellow

In a stew-pot, brown vegetables in oil. Add 4 cups of water, the pumpkin, boullion, & seasonings. Bring to a boil then reduce to Medium and cover pot. Cook for an hour, then transfer the vegetables and 1 cup broth to sturdy glass blender and puree to creamy consistency. Return to the stew-pot, stir thoroughly, and serve.

SPICY SWEET & SOUR BEANS

1 can red beans
1 diced onion
1 Tbsp cooking oil
1 tsp MD Onion
1 Tbsp brown mustard
¼ cup ketchup
2 Tbsp dark brown sugar
1 tsp allspice

Brown onion in oil. Add beans and simmer for 10 minutes. Stir in sugar, mustard, ketchup, spices, and continue to simmer for 1 hour. This can be served on iceberg lettuce leaves, seeded bell pepper halves, baked potatoes, etc. May be put through blender for a dip or sandwich spread.

GRANOLA BREAD

1 ½ cups SR flour
1/3 cup instant oatmeal
1 tsp cinnamon
1 tsp powdered ginger
2 Tbsp raisins
½ cup dark brown sugar
½ cup unsweetened applesauce
½ cup canola oil
¼ tsp salt

Sift flour into mixing bowl. Stir in oatmeal, raisins, spices, salt, and sugar. Add applesauce and canola oil and mix thoroughly. Pour into loaf pan, spreading the dough evenly to each corner. Bake at 350 F for 1 hour or until bread rises and browns. Serve warm with a topping of margarine and honey, dusted with cinnamon, or let cool and cut into bars / squares for breakfast / lunchbox treats. Fortify the bread with additional dried fruit (apples, dates, cranberries) and walnuts.

TOMATO PUREE

1 can diced salt-free tomatoes, or 2 sliced fresh tomatoes

1 sliced onion

1 minced stalk of celery

1 Tbsp cooking oil

1 tsp powdered garlic

1 tsp basil

1 tsp BTB Yellow

¼ cup baby carrots

Brown onion, celery, and carrots in oil. Add tomatoes basil, boullion, and garlic, cover and simmer for ½ hour, stirring occasionally. Pour mixture into glass blender container and whirl to desired consistency. Return to the pot and simmer 15 minutes more. Serve with toasted cheese sandwiches.

LENTIL OR SPLIT-PEA SOUP

1 lb washed dry lentils/ peas

6-8 cups water

1 sliced stalk celery

½ cup diced bell pepper

½ cup diced carrots

2 sliced onions

1 diced tomato

½ cup washed dry barley

1 Tbsp BTB Yellow

1 tsp ground sage

1 tsp basil

½ tsp rosemary

½ tsp black pepper

1 tsp powdered garlic

Bring water to boil on medium heat, add lentils/ peas and lower to simmer ½ hour. Stir in rest of ingredients and simmer for 1-2 hours, stirring occasionally, covered. Soup will be thick. 4 or 5 sliced potatoes may sub for barley.

HERBED RICE & ORANGE

2 cups cooked white or brown rice

2 Tbsp canola or olive oil

1 Tbsp margarine or butter

1 tsp dried basil

1 tsp powdered garlic

1 tsp low-sodium salt

1 peeled and separated navel orange

Toss warm rice (cooked 'dry' so that each grain separates) with oil and herbs. Serve with orange pegs. You may grate a little orange peel on the rice for added zing.

TROPICAL SALAD

1 peeled and seeded orange, diced, or small can mandarin orange slices
1 small can diced pineapple
½ cup shredded coconut
½ tsp powdered ginger
1 cup orange yogurt, preferably Publix low-fat and sugar-free
½ cup low-fat whipped cream or substitute
Stir thoroughly and serve cold.

VEGETARIAN SALADE NICOISE (nee-swah)

Toss together:

2-3 cups shredded lettuce, preferably Iceburg (Romaine has high amt of Vitamin K)
2 sliced tomatoes
1 sliced, boiled egg
1-2 Greek peppers (optional)
½ cup pitted olives, black or green (green may be stuffed with pimento)

Dress with:

2 Tbsp salad oil
1 Tbsp lemon juice
1 tsp basil
½ tsp garlic powder
½ tsp black pepper
½ tsp onion powder

QUICK SPAGHETTI

1 small pkg thin spaghetti or rotini
1 can Italian-style tomatoes
1 small can tomato paste
1 Tbsp cooking oil, preferably olive
1-2 tsps Italian seasoning / MD Italian
½ - 1 tsp garlic powder
½ tsp black pepper

Cook macaroni per package directions, preferably al dente. Drain and return to the cooking pot. Stir in remaining ingredients thoroughly and let sit on cooling burner for ten minutes, or simply serve as is.

PASTA PRIMAVERA

1 small pkg pasta (rotini, shells, bowties)
½ cup mayonnaise
1 cup cooked frozen or mixed vegetables
1 tsp basil or Italian seasoning
½ tsp garlic powder
½ tsp black pepper

Cook pasta per package directions, drain and return to cooking pot. Stir in remaining ingredients and serve warm, or refrigerate a few hours for cold summer salad.

POTATO SALAD

3 Russet potatoes, or 4-6 red-skinned potatoes
2-3 eggs
1 minced stalk of celery
½ cup mayonnaise
½ tsp garlic powder
½ tsp onion powder
1 tsp low-sodium salt
1 tsp black pepper
1 tsp paprika

Boil potatoes and eggs together in one pot. Remove the eggs after 20 minutes, peel in cold water, and refrigerate until needed. When potatoes are done (about an hour), remove them and slice into 1" chunks. Slice eggs into small pieces, and stir into potatoes. Add mayo and all seasonings except paprika – this you will sprinkle atop the salad for color. Refrigerate salad for a couple of hours, or serve warm.

POTATOES AND PICKLES

2 sliced, freshly-baked potatoes
1 cup sliced Harvard beets
½ cup sweet gherkins
2 Greek peppers
½ cup pitted olives
¼ cup feta, Gorgonzola, or bleu cheese
1 Tbsp salad oil
1 tsp MD Garlic

Gently toss potatoes and pickles; dress with oil and seasoning. This is a good cold summer dish.

ORANGE SOUP

3 peeled and quartered sweet potatoes
4 sliced carrots
2 sliced onions
1 sliced stalk of celery
1 Tbsp BTB Yellow
1 cup orange juice
1 tsp coriander
1 tsp ginger

Cook vegetables in 3 quarts of water until tender. Add bouillion, orange juice, coriander, and ginger; simmer for an hour, covered. Serve hot or cold. Puree in a blender if you like. Good for the sniffles.

BASIC CURRY

4 diced potatoes
2 sliced onions
1 seeded and sliced green bell pepper
3 sliced carrots
2 sliced tomatoes
1 tsp BTB Yellow
1-2 tsp curry powder

Brown the vegetables, then braise in the covered pot in 1-2 cups of water with the bouillion and curry powder mixed in. Serve with separate side of rice.

RISOTTO

1 cup white rice
2 ½ cups water
½ tsp low-sodium salt
1 Tbsp cooking oil, preferably olive
1-2 tsp MD Italian or Garlic

Bring water to a boil in a lidded pot. Add rice and salt, cover, and bring down to a simmer. Rice will be mushy. Stir in oil and seasonings. You can make a sort of rice pudding by replacing the oil and seasoning with 2 Tbsp butter or margarine and sugar to taste, with a bit of vanilla and/or cinnamon.

HUMMUS

1 can chick peas (aka Garbanzo beans)
2 Tbsp salad oil, preferably olive
2 cloves garlic
1 tsp low-sodium salt
1 tsp Tabasco sauce (optional)

Grind ingredients in blender until smooth. Serve with raw vegetables – celery, carrots, bell pepper, et al. This can also be made with a cup or two of cooked lentils.

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